

Libby - wood chips
Machete DUS
etc

July 19, 2011

Kootenai Valley Record

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1258916 - R8 SDMS

Opinion

To the Editor

Congressional investigation will move EPA to base decisions on science

To the Editor:

Of course EPA says the bark is safe, their only alternative is to admit that their inattention to protocols in letting this material be released from an Operable Unit of the Superfund site has jeopardized 11 years and \$370 million worth of effort with cross contamination caused by EPA.

The unprofessionalism of using qualitative analytical methods wasn't enough for these folks, they had to use fire hoses to wet the material down so they wouldn't stir up dust - when testing for dust.

Now they reassure us that the results showed less

than 1 percent asbestos. If only EPA toxicologist Chris Weis hadn't written his risk memo of May 17, 2000, wherein he stated "even the lowest soil asbestos concentrations (0.001 percent) were able to produce airborne asbestos concentrations which greatly exceed recommended human exposure limits." No wonder they turned on the hoses.

Mike Cirian and Victor Kettlapper do not have data and analyses to back up their statements. Their own Office of Inspector General has called them on the carpet, in the Quick Reaction report of December 2006, and told them to correct

"exceptionally deceiving" public health information such as this. They refuse to do so because lying really works better.

Remember, EPA Region 8 is the agency which brought us such classics as "only clean vermiculite was spilled" when the boat ramp was ripped up.

Region 8 promised Montana Governor Martz that they would commit to being done in four years if she fired the Silver Bullet that forced the state to help pick up the tab for this mess. In January of 2002! Whoopsee. 2006 came and went years ago.

Region 8 told the city of Libby that city-owned OU-1 was "clean, safe for

all uses" in 2005. They are getting ready to correct that lie in 2011, but still refuse to actually clean it.

Region 8 told this community that they had a good drug and alcohol program in place on this project, until repeated accidents proved otherwise. Reports that entire crews were getting drunk and joyriding in the mine could no longer be denied.

Even the recent announcement that the air in Libby is 10,000 times cleaner than before EPA came to save us is only verified in studies EPA commissioned in 1982 and 1985. The same studies EPA hid from the public, shelved, so they wouldn't

have to spend money in Libby decades ago when they could have actually made a difference.

EPA Region 8 has absolutely no credibility on any issue in Libby. Their past lies haunt them today.

This is where AP reporter Matt Brown has done this community a huge favor. He has taken the discussion beyond petty local politics. EPA has bought the loyalty of local politicians with your money, Libby citizen. Quite possibly with your health. Matt Brown got the attention of our congressional delegation who don't have that tangled involvement that comes from profiteering

on buildings, topsoil, or health care.

When Senator Baucus and Representative Rehberg quiz EPA headquarters, the voices of our compromised local leaders will be squelched. Lisa Jackson has promised that science will move her agency, not politics. With the majority of our congressional delegation on board, I have faith this will prove to be true.

When Paul Rummelhart takes out ads saying this material is for sale, we can believe the rhetoric coming from EPA. Telling us it poses no significant risk, while barring the future sale of bark, exposes the lie.

DC Orr